

## **ABSTRACT**

A lacing apparatus is provided comprising a lace which maybe threaded through a plurality of apertures defined by at least two portions of an article; a connector for connecting the free ends of the lace to one another, so that when the free ends of the lace are connected to one another, the lace forms a continuous loop; and a mechanical locking device for receiving the lace and releasably locking at least two portions of the lace in proximity to one another when at least a portion of the lace has been threaded through the apertures and the free ends of the lace are connected to one another. Footwear incorporating features of this apparatus, as well as methods of releasably lacing together two or more objects, are also disclosed.